

Olmsted County Government Center, Rochester, MN



Digital Imaging Profile (Employing Persons with Developmental Disabilities) Olmsted County Corrections Department, Rochester, MN 11/17/2005

The Project:

The project is an ongoing system to eliminate the storage of closed files. The system began in 1998 and has evolved. The project is digital imaging both stored files and closed files. When a criminal case is closed, the file would ordinarily be on its way to a storage room; now it goes to digital imaging instead.

This process is expected to continue until the technology changes and the records are imaged “up-front” at the original source. The direction is shifting to imaging documents as they are received at the beginning of the process. The imaging staff would then be expected to image all documents as they are received in the office, making it necessary to have imaging staff working on a daily basis.

Prior to this project, files were stored in file rooms and purged annually. There continues to be a large number of stored files to be imaged. The imaged files are used by corrections staff to review files of returning clients.

There are currently about 15,000 imaged client files with an average of 100 pages; some range as high as 1,000 pages. A total of 1,500,000 pages have been scanned.

Since people with developmental disabilities began doing the imaging work in May 2004, they have completed about 400,000 pages of those files.

The current rate of scanning is about 2,000 pages per person daily. The rate can reach as high as 3,000 pages per day depending upon the number of pages in a file.

Staffing:

This is an ongoing systems process that the Corrections Department had previously been performing with people without disabilities. As a result of budget cuts, the Corrections Department was not able to fill vacated positions in the support staff, therefore, the imaging of files was put on low priority, and storage of closed files quickly became an issue. Paul Fleissner, Director of Community Services approached the Corrections Department and offered funding if they were to pursue the employment of people with developmental disabilities.

Melissa Treichel was hired to perform the digital imaging job. Melissa works one 8 hour shift per week at the Corrections Department earning \$5.50 per hour, and works 4-eight hour shifts per week at ABC doing center based work at a sub-minimum wage piece work job. Melissa says that is not the type of work, pay, or environment she likes best. She would like to work all five days at Corrections.

Melissa's supervisor at Corrections says the workload is there for Melissa to work full-time; however, there is a need for another scanner. The current scanner is shared between other departments and there is no more time available except an evening shift. Corrections is currently in the process of working with Community Services (Developmental Disabilities Unit) to hire another person with disabilities to work an evening shift. The inhibiting factor for expanding this project is acquiring funds to purchase an additional scanner and the hiring of additional people with disabilities. With a second scanner, scheduling difficulties would diminish, and Corrections and Community Services would have the ability to utilize the equipment on a full-time basis.

There are backup personnel (people without disabilities) who are trained to perform the job.

The work site equipment and software:

Hardware:

Bell & Howell COPISCAN 8080D 500 sheet automatic document feeder (2 sides) (new price is \$22,000). Refurbished machines are available at a significant reduction in price.

Software:

In house Olmsted software run on IBM AS 400

The worksite:

The imaging work area is in an integrated office in Community Services, at the Olmsted County Government Center. The particular office where the imaging is done is a two person office with one shared imaging machine. Melissa's office co-worker is a 20 year veteran county employee without disabilities. Both comment that they really enjoy working together.

The work flow and process:

Boxes of files are brought to the work area by Corrections support staff. Corrections staff handle the coding of each folder.

Melissa's activities include:

- Preparing the files for scanning; removing clips, staples etc,
- If necessary, making a copy of some documents for scanning
- Scanning the documents
- Indexing and coding in the computer.
- Quality check
- Preparing files in boxes to be removed from her area.

The indexing is a new activity for Melissa; something new that she is learning. According to Melissa, her quality is excellent and now she is trying to improve her speed.

Melissa's Supervisor, Ardi Ihrke, states that the quality of Melissa's work is excellent and her speed is progressing just fine. After the imaging is completed, the Corrections staff transport the boxes back to the Corrections Department for verification and destruction.

Scope and future plans:

Currently, Melissa is doing imaging of stored files and incoming new files. It is anticipated that the Corrections document process will get to a point of imaging all incoming documents at the point of origin.

Melissa states that she wants to work a full five day week at the Government Center doing imaging and other office work.

Melissa's supervisor acknowledges that is her preferred direction too; assuming they can overcome the funding issue.

She says Melissa is an excellent employee and a pleasure to work with.